



## IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD - MARKING SHEET

<b>Name of group: Airyhall School</b>	<b>Assessment date: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2019</b>
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	<b>Jim Henderson &amp; Wendy Suttar</b>
<p><b>Introduction:</b> Airyhall School is managed by a private company rather than the City Council but remains focussed on working with a range of partners including Aberdeen City Council and Slopefield Allotments to achieve its aims. The Eco Group is elected at the start of each year by the pupils and this year chose three main goals to work towards - sustainability; litter; and saving power. The pupils gave an enthusiastic presentation where all took part, and each had an opportunity to explain something of what was being done in the school garden; their knowledge and understanding came across clearly.</p>	
<b>Section A - Community Participation (40% or 40 points)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school maintains strong partnerships with Aberdeen City Council; the James Hutton Institute; Slopefield Allotments; Johnstone Gardens; and Ben Reid which is a local plant nursery and garden centre.</li> <li>• There is an informative website for parents and the wider audience which highlights environmental achievements; this is kept up to date.</li> <li>• A school allotment is well maintained at Slopefield Allotments, with all years visiting this in rotation apart from P1, who are not left out as they are able to grow within the polytunnel in the school grounds.</li> <li>• The school enters many local competitions and inter-school competitions, reinvesting its winnings in the school garden.</li> <li>• The group visited the Aberdeen Nuart Festival and welcomed a sculptor from that festival to the school to teach clay sculpting. They also made posters along the same lines as the festival and display these throughout the school.</li> <li>• The group is hosting a Business Breakfast to thank all their partners for their support where their art will be displayed.</li> <li>• The group visits a local care home on a regular basis and invited the residents to visit them at the school.</li> <li>• Expo, a local company, donated old safety helmets and wooden planters for the group to use in their garden.</li> <li>• Following the success of sales at the school fair, the group has a pop-up shop on occasion and sells plants and produce to parents. Profits go to Slopefield Allotments.</li> </ul>	
Total points assessed for Section A (out of 40)	40
<b>Section B - Environmental Responsibility (30% or 30 points)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has again retained its Green Flag status for the sixth year.</li> <li>• For the first time this year the group sold plants and produce at the school fair and invested the earnings in the garden.</li> </ul>	



- The school carries out weekly litter picks within the school grounds and the surrounding area and also take part in litter picking initiatives in the city such as the annual 24hr glitter pick. Its efforts in this area are phenomenal.
- A stand of trees had been planted by the first children attending the school when it was new (10 years ago) and the group is now developing paths through the trees, putting up bird boxes, feeders, and bug boxes to create an outdoor classroom and plan to make this a bluebell wood.
- The group has sited and maintained a bee home, a bug hotel, a butterfly feeder and a hedgehog house by the woods.
- The group has now completed its third year of a three-year composting cycle and has produced excellent compost which it used on its own beds.
- The group maintains its own eco noticeboard in a prominent position, with some lovely posters and signs to catch the eye.

Total points assessed for Section B (out of 30)	29
<b>Gardening Achievement (30% or 30 points)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various experiments growing plants such as potatoes in different soils to see how the yield is affected.</li> <li>• Strawberry plants grown from runners were sold at the school fair and the pupils are told they can pick and eat the fruit as it ripens.</li> <li>• The polytunnel is used by P1 pupils and for growing experiments such as 'three sisters' companion planting using beans, corn, and squash. The P1 group is growing pumpkins for the first time this year.</li> <li>• Daniel Shand, the city gardener, visits regularly to work with the group on its projects.</li> <li>• Safety helmets donated by Expo were planted with bulbs for a spring display and replanted with busy lizzies that the school had grown from seed for the summer.</li> <li>• The Sundial Garden was new last year and has been added to and replanted as a herb garden this year, retaining the clock/sundial theme.</li> <li>• The Ladybird Garden includes painted stones from the younger pupils as well as two ladybird tables for them to nest in.</li> <li>• The School Badge garden was chosen, designed and planted by the children and the plants purchased with their profit from the plant sales.</li> <li>• Whilst a new school is being built for pupils from Countesswells, they are attending Airyhall and an apple tree has been bought and planted to remember them once they leave.</li> <li>• A blackcurrant hedge has been started to hide the compost bins from the view of neighbouring houses and is growing well.</li> <li>• A display of sweet peas and sunflowers was being grown against a wire mesh fence, and a decorative display representing a volcano also used the fence, with small plastic bottles recycled as planters for nasturtiums representing the eruption and was very effective. We asked if the volcano had a name and, although it did not, one was immediately suggested and taken on board – Mount Eco.</li> </ul>	
Total points assessed for Section C (out of 30)	29
<b>GRAND TOTAL POINTS ASSESSED</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>LEVEL ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Level 5 - OUTSTANDING</b>





### Areas of achievement:

- The intense enthusiasm of the group members, who all wanted to tell us what they had done and were obviously proud of what they had achieved - justly so.
- It was clear that they knew what they were talking about.
- The arrangements made to include P1's who couldn't walk up to the allotments to grow.
- The staff were as enthusiastic as the children and delighted with their achievements.
- The garden experiments successfully bring science into the outdoors, melding the classroom with the growing experience.

### Recommendations/suggestions from your assessor:

- Remember to move the blackcurrant bush out of the polytunnel as it cannot grow properly in the heated environment.
- Approach Aberdeen City Council for bulbs for the bluebell wood. It may not be able to provide bluebells, but muscari may be available, and would make a good alternative.
- We would like to congratulate the group on the quality of its compost cycle.
- We would suggest the group enters the Aberdeen City Eco Awards, as its achievements are excellent.

## RESULTS

Level	Description	Points
Level 1	Establishing	0-35
Level 2	Improving	36-52
Level 3	Advancing	53-68
Level 4	Thriving	69-85
Level 5	Outstanding	86-100

